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## "Maine" (excerpt from the Proceedings of the National Woman Suffrage Association Convention) 1899

National Woman Suffrage Association Staff  
*National Woman Suffrage Association*

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Convention. The place was crowded with attentive listeners, men and women. Petitions had already been presented by the Portia and Era Clubs to the Convention for the privilege of the ballot to the women of legal age.

The Convention did give that privilege, but not unreservedly. It was ordained "that women, property owners, of legal age, could vote on levying of special taxes for sewerage and drainage."

Strenuous efforts have been made the past three months by the suffrage women to get the requisite number of names to a petition for an election day to be fixed, when the proposition of underground sewerage should be decided by the people.

The petition was presented to the Council on April 19th, and June 2d has been selected for the election day.

We regret that it did not occur earlier, that the result of this first opportunity of women to vote in Louisiana might be recorded in this report.

CAROLINE E. MERRICK, President.

#### MAINE WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION.

A widespread and far-reaching interest has been aroused among the women of Maine during the past year. This is largely due to the unremitting and earnest efforts of the State Suffrage Association. This latent interest was first aroused by the appeals for aid in raising the one hundred dollars pledged toward the work of the N. A. W. S. A.

Our local clubs have increased in membership and interest. One club has been reorganized at Saco by the State Organizer, Mrs. E. H. Osgood, and we have organized a club at Old Orchard, while rumors reach us from various sections of an awakened sentiment in favor of suffrage and a desire to get into working order.

The Annual Convention in September, held at Hampden, was enriched and enlivened by the presence of our beloved National President, Miss Anthony, and our co-laborer, Miss E. U. Yates.

At this convention the State Society put itself on record "that it would hold firmly to the original plan of giving its energies to obtain the unrestricted ballot for woman, believing she will use it wisely."

Large quantities of literature have been circulated through the State, *The Woman's Journal* has been sent for a specified time to several of our legislators not interested in suffrage, and the Portland Club has placed *The Journal* on file in the public library in that city.

In January a mid-winter Convention was held in Saco. Mr. H. B. Blackwell and Miss E. U. Yates lent the inspiration of their presence to this meeting, which we feel has been permanent in good results.

Mrs. Sarah G. Crosby, Superintendent of Press Work, has accom-

plished wonders with the press of the State since October last. Where we had feared rebuffs we were accorded a kind recognition, and of eighty-five papers interviewed during this time only five refused suffrage matter sent for publication. Two hundred and thirty articles have been published, while current events of suffrage work are always courteously received and used in various local papers.

Not being sufficiently organized to venture on a petition asking for full suffrage, and this being our legislative year, it was deemed best to compromise matters by circulating and presenting a petition praying "that the tax-paying women of Maine, being without representation, most respectfully ask that all women in this State subject to taxation be exempted therefrom."

The readiness with which these tax-paying women responded to the invitations to sign the petition (many of them anti-suffragists) was quite marvelous to the suffragists, who had never before been able to reach them, and although the Society from the first had little hope of a favorable hearing before the Committee on Taxation, they were glad of the opportunity to open the eyes of our legislators to the injustice done thousands of women in our State. We feel, as a means of agitating the subject and awakening an interest on the part of those who have before been indifferent, the measure must be chronicled as a success.

LUCY HOBART DAY, President.

HELEN COFFIN BEEDY, Corresponding Secretary.

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#### MARYLAND WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION.

Although we enroll new names each year, some invariably drop off, and we are forced to come before the National Association once again with only about one hundred members. However, we have heard of but one convert who did not remain a thorough suffragist, and consequently our following is in reality increasing. We are pleased to note that two or three clubs of women in Baltimore are studying civic reform, and one has made a systematic investigation of the public school system, visiting and inspecting buildings to ascertain their conditions pertaining to light, heat and sanitation. To this action we ascribe the fact that the Mayor of the city has recently requested some of these women to take entire charge of refurnishing and decorating one of the public schools. When the new city charter goes into effect we confidently expect to find women appointed on the school boards.

Thousands of pages of suffrage literature have been distributed, and the Suffrage Department of the W. C. T. U. has disseminated our doctrines and enabled us more than once to obtain a hearing among women to whom our ideas were almost unknown.